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Regional and subregional inputs

Regional and subregional inputs

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report highlights the actions taken to foster progress towards the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) in the context of the overall theme of the tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests "Forests and economic development"; progress towards achievement of the four global objectives on forests and the Millennium Development Goals; and characteristics of regional and subregional cooperation and partnerships in facilitating cooperation in sustainable forest management, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Overview	3
III.	Substantive matters to be considered by the Forum	4
	A. Assessment of progress towards the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests in the context of the overall theme "Forests and economic development"	4
	B. Progress towards achievement of the global objectives on forests	8
	C. Millennium Development Goals	10
	D. Characteristics of regional and subregional cooperation and partnerships in facilitating sustainable forest management	11
IV.	Lessons learned	15
Annex		
	Regional and subregional entities providing inputs to the tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests	16

I. Introduction

1. The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2007-2015[1] set a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. Since its eighth session, in 2009, the Forum has solicited inputs from relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.

2. At its ninth session, the Forum invited regional and subregional organizations to strengthen their contributions to the work of the Forum and to provide input, in the context of the overall theme of its tenth session, on their efforts towards implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) and its four global objectives on forests,[2] by sharing regional perspectives, approaches and experiences as well as regional activities on North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation on sustainable forest management.

3. In order to facilitate the submission of regional and subregional inputs for the current session, the Forum secretariat prepared an information note and developed a reporting format. The present report summarizes the submissions received from the entities listed in the annex to the report.

II. Overview

4. The various entities listed in the annex used the reporting questionnaire sent out by the Forum secretariat to prepare their responses. A few responses were based on the results of specific meetings organized by the entities to discuss their contributions. The Forum secretariat received 14 regional and subregional responses. Most reveal that the forest instrument and the four global objectives contained therein are being taken into account in the design and implementation of forest-related policies. The reports submitted highlight regional and subregional perspectives on efforts towards the implementation of the forest instrument and the four global objectives.

5. Regarding economic, social and environmental measures, the responding regional and subregional entities revealed that forests benefit the people who depend on them for their livelihoods. However, progress differed among the reporting entities. Challenges highlighted included lack of adequate funding for activities that increase political commitment and generate information necessary for sustainable forest management, and weak Forest Law Enforcement and Governance structures.

[1] See E/2007/42-E/CN.18/2007/8, chap. I, sect. C, resolution 7/1, annex.

[2] See General Assembly resolution 62/98, annex.

III. Substantive matters to be considered by the Forum

A. Assessment of progress towards the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests in the context of the overall theme "Forests and economic development"

6. Responses revealed that the entities were committed to promoting sustainable forest management and were aware of the importance of strong political commitment in implementing the forest instrument. In an effort to foster political commitment to sustainable forest management, the African Forest Forum serves as a platform for forest stakeholders on the continent. The Forum continued to support African delegates, technically and logistically, to participate in various meetings and other forums that deal with the forest instrument and on financing its implementation. The Forum also continued to foster political commitment for sustainable forest management by providing sound and reliable scientific and technical information that guides decision-making and technical application in respect of forest and tree management in Africa.

7. The national forest policies, strategies and plans of many countries in Africa contain elements of the forest instrument. For instance, the East African Community adopted common policies for, and promoted the exchange of information on the development, conservation and management of natural forests, commercial plantations and natural reserves. However, challenges encountered in implementing those policies include uncoordinated institutional efforts, conflicting institutional mandates, and administrative and bureaucratic procedures. At the same time, support for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) has enabled countries to address implementation of the forest instrument through climate change support programmes, national forest programmes, and programmes relating to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Countries have also linked their national forest plans to overall national development plans and programmes, thereby linking forests to poverty eradication, employment creation, environment protection, and raising national incomes. In Africa, there are currently a number of pilot projects aimed at enhancing forest-based economic development. Various organizations have established sustainable supplies of hardwood from certified well-managed forests. The adoption of the forest instrument at the global level has given a new twist to sustainable forest management in the Congo Basin by supporting the implementation of the Treaty on the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa, and to Establish the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC).

8. In the Asia-Pacific region, despite increased recognition of the unique role forests play in socioeconomic development, agreement has not been reached on unified standards and approaches for sustainable forest management, which impedes the fulfilment of the political commitment on the ground. There is a need to follow up on the strong political commitments that have been made. The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation remains committed to promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region and values regional high-level cooperation mechanisms and endeavours as opportunities to address sustainable forest management. In June 2011, the Network organized the Asia-Europe Meeting Symposium on Sustainable Forest Management to Address Climate

Change, which included discussions on actions taken by each Government to promote sustainable forest management; the significance of applying sustainable forest management to address climate change; and best practices in sustainable forest management and their effect on climate change mitigation in each country. The Asia-Europe Meeting is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation that brings together the 27 member States of the European Union, 2 European countries, the European Commission, 20 Asian countries and the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The dialogue addresses political, economic and cultural issues, with the objective of strengthening the relationship between the two regions, in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. In September 2011, the Asia-Pacific Network organized and supported the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forestry Ministerial Meeting. This was the first-ever meeting of ministers responsible for forests; it was attended by 21 APEC member economies, heads of State, international organizations and Chief Executive Officers from the private sector. The ministers adopted the Beijing Statement on Forests and Forestry, which outlines further cooperation on forests and the Network's potential in forming synergy among the multiple stakeholders in the region.

9. In the Pacific subregion, forests and trees are vital to the well-being of the people. Nevertheless, forests and trees continue to be converted and degraded as populations and the consequent need to satisfy socioeconomic development demands increase. The inability to allocate sufficient funding for Pacific island countries to implement programmes and activities towards sustainable forest management remains a challenge. In response to this challenge, as part of its core programme, the secretariat of the Pacific Community initiated in 2000 a regional resource-mobilizing effort focused on capacity development for sustainable forest management. In pursuing this regional approach, the Community acts as the regional focal point for forests and trees, effectively coordinating with other development partners, to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance synergies, working towards deepening partnerships and collaborations. In line with the objectives of the strategic plan for its Land Resources Division, the organization continues to support national forest policy formulation and review.

10. The permanent secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization facilitates the regional cooperation processes among its member countries, having developed, inter alia, the implementation of pilot/demonstration projects aimed at promoting the sustainable development in the region, with emphasis on improving livelihoods for local communities. The secretariat also generates inputs for the national and regional political dialogue aimed at enhancing regional cooperation, and documenting and disseminating best practices for possible replication.

11. In order to foster political commitment, the European Forest Institute took a decisive step towards strengthening its policy support activities by establishing a Policy Support Office in Barcelona, Spain. The Institute launched ThinkForest, a high-level discussion and information-sharing forum on the future of forests. Presided over by Mr. Göran Persson, former Prime Minister of Sweden, ThinkForest is a unique science policy action forum that brings together high-level policymakers and leading European forest scientists to discuss science policy dialogue on strategic forest-related issues. The Institute actively participated in the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe and launched a new publication series, entitled *What Science Can Tell Us*. The first issue, *Water for Forests and People in the Mediterranean — A*

Challenging Balance, was aimed at improving the science policy interface on water and forest interactions and trade-offs. These publications provide unbiased scientific information on issues relating to sustainable forest management.

12. Since 2004, the Institute has coordinated a regional-level multi-year capacity development project on forest policy and economics education and research in the South-East European countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with nine partner research and education institutions. The project is aimed at fostering a holistic approach to sustainable forest management.

1. Actions to enhance regional cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance

13. The African Forest Forum continued to promote Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) mainly in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa and the Sahel, with commendable progress. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) established two working groups, one to guide the evolution of good forest governance and law enforcement and another to spearhead the formation of a timber association that would oversee legal harvesting and processing of timber and fair trade in forest products. These actions will contribute to improving sustainable forest management by reducing illegality in forest practices; increase incomes at various levels; and reduce deforestation and degradation of forest lands. African Governments also established an intergovernmental institution, namely, the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, which is responsible for reducing and ultimately eliminating illegal trade in wild fauna and flora on the continent. The Task Force facilitates cooperative activities on law enforcement operations; investigates violations of national wildlife legislation; and disseminates and exchanges information on illegal trade activities, capacity-building and awareness-raising. In addition, some countries started implementing FLEGT through voluntary partnership agreements.

14. ASEAN strengthened sustainable forest management by improving its monitoring, assessment and reporting format with agreed criteria and indicators. Its States members developed and agreed to use the online format as a regional reporting mechanism. The ASEAN Declaration of Environmental Sustainability aims to strengthen law enforcement, combating illegal logging and illegal trade.

15. In the Amazon region, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization contributed to strengthening the capacity of forest authorities to address illegal forest-related activities through a regional pilot project, implemented by its permanent secretariat, aimed at developing a regional electronic key for the identification of timber species in the Amazon and a database that allows, through infrared light spectroscopy, the differentiation of apparently similar forest species.

2. Regional and subregional efforts to implement the forest instrument and the impact of the instrument on enhancing forest-based economic development

16. Elements of the forest instrument are contained in the national forest policies, strategies and plans of many African countries. In this regard, the forest instrument has underlined the relevance of those elements and the need to implement them holistically. At the same time, climate change discussions have contributed to

raising the profile of forests and their contribution to addressing the adverse effects of climate change. All elements that constitute the definition of REDD+ are also elements of the forest instrument and as such support that has been and continues to be given through REDD+ and the clean development mechanism (afforestation and reforestation) has enabled many countries, for instance, in Africa to address the forest instrument, albeit indirectly. The forest instrument has also been implemented through climate change support programmes and on-going national programmes relating to other conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. At the same time, many countries now link national forest plans to overall national development plans and programmes, thereby linking forests to broader national goals and objectives, such as poverty eradication, employment creation, protection of the environment and raising national incomes.

17. During the intersessional period, the permanent secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization implemented two pilot projects. The first project, implemented with the support of the Amazon Regional Programme, was entitled "Sustainable forest-handling in native forests and legal timber-marketing chains in the centre-south of Equatorial Amazon" and focused on developing a community forest management model. The other, entitled "Strengthening the value chains of natural products from the Amazon in the territory of the Shuar-Transkutukú communities, Province of Morona-Santiago, Ecuador, and the producers association PALMASAD, Madre de Dios, Peru", focused on the production and trade of non-timber forestry products and was aimed at increasing revenue for the Shuar communities.

18. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization also developed an initiative on accountability of the forest sector in national accounts, which is aimed at incorporating forest statistics into national statistics through the establishment of satellite forest accounts that will evaluate economic, social and environmental variables of forests and incorporate them into the national statistics, thereby enabling the measurement of the effective contribution of forests to national economies. The initiative was developed in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

19. In an effort to enhance regional cooperation to promote international trade in products from sustainably harvested forests, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and FAO published the *Forest Products Annual Market Review 2011-2012*, a keystone publication that provides general and statistical information on forest product markets in the ECE region (Europe, North America, the Caucasus and Central Asia). Based on the Review, market consultations were held in Geneva in October 2012 to discuss market developments in the ECE region and produce forecasts; discuss policy developments influencing forest products markets; and produce a market statement. The ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section was also actively engaged in wood energy work; together with the International Energy Agency and the European Commission, the Section developed a "joint wood energy enquiry", which collects data on both sources and uses of wood and promotes cooperation between the energy and forest sectors, providing a comprehensive framework on the role of wood energy in Member States. In addition, the Section organized various events in the past three years to provide policymakers in the ECE region with a set of views from a wide range of involved sectors to address the economic, social and environmental aspects of the growing demand for and use of wood for energy.

B. Progress towards achievement of the global objectives on forests

20. In the Asia-Pacific region and Europe, progress continued towards the achievement of global objectives 1, 2 and 3. There was a reported increase in forest financing owing, in particular, to the region's efforts and commitment to reverse the decline in official development assistance (ODA) for sustainable forest management, although much of the increase was for a select few countries qualifying for REDD+ financing, and in mobilizing more financial resources for sustainable forest management.

1. Global Objective 1: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation

21. During this intersessional period, the African Forest Forum focused on reversing loss of forest cover by directly participating — and supporting the participation of delegates from African countries — in forums, meetings and workshops that address global objective 1. It also continued work on identifying measures to address global objective 1 by undertaking activities that promote sustainable forest management and the restoration of degraded forests through afforestation and reforestation. Other efforts included sensitizing practitioners and policymakers at the national, subregional and regional levels on forest degradation prevention measures. One of its key activities in that regard was generating and disseminating relevant information to all stakeholders in African forests through multiple media channels.

22. The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation launched a national project in Cambodia entitled "Multifunctional restoration and management of degraded forest areas", which was developed and implemented by the Institute of Forest and Wildlife Research and Development. The environmental protection and biodiversity conservation project is aimed at enhancing the country's capacity to restore degraded forestlands in Koh Kong province and community forests in Siem Reap province to improve the local community's livelihoods through the production of timber and non-wood forest products.

23. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization implemented a regional project entitled "Monitoring deforestation, forest use and changes in the use of land in the Pan-Amazon forests", which was aimed at supporting member countries in developing and applying deforestation monitoring systems and forest cover national monitoring plans. The project contributed to building an institutional structure for implementation at both the regional and national levels; close to 45 experts were trained in the use of monitoring systems developed by the National Institute for Space Research. A network across participating institutions was also developed. The first seven national deforestation monitoring plans were completed in early 2013. An initiative to develop a regional protocol on combating and controlling forest fires is also under consideration. Once completed, the protocol will promote the establishment of mechanisms for coordination and joint work between two or more institutions responsible for combating and controlling forest fires in border areas. It will also facilitate cross-border actions to reduce forest cover loss and forest degradation in the Amazon region.

24. The European Forest Institute hosts the European Union REDD Facility, one of several European initiatives to address the underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and foster sustainable forest management in developing countries. Established by the Institute in 2010 with the financial support of the European Commission, the Facility supports developing countries in preparing for and implementing REDD+. It also assists developing countries in meeting their goals in building needed capacity for REDD+, with a focus on improving governance, exploring interactions between the FLEGT and REDD+ processes at the country level and enhancing lessons learned from those interactions. The Facility also informs policymaking by the European Commission and States members of the European Union on REDD+ support to developing countries.

2. Global objective 2: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people

25. In 2012, the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation launched the project "Demonstration of sustainable forest management with community participation in Nepal". The project, which was implemented together with the Federation of Community Forestry Users of Nepal, focused on creating green job opportunities, improving local livelihoods and shaping national forest policy and strategic planning through the establishment of community-based cooperatives and enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation.

26. In 2011, the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, in cooperation with the Finnish Environment Institute, the secretariat of the ECE Water Convention, FAO, the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, prepared a paper entitled "Payments for forest-related ecosystem services: What role for a green economy?"

3. Global objective 3: Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests

27. The African Forest Forum continued to support delegates from African countries in discourses at various levels to raise attention, political commitment and resources to attain global objective 3. The Forum's work on rehabilitating degraded lands will also contribute to efforts in increasing forest cover in Africa. The Forum also plans to strengthen certification capacity in the African forest sector in the short to medium term.

28. Two of the four thematic priorities in the 2011-2015 strategic plan of the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation, namely improving forest management to reduce forest loss and degradation and monitoring progress towards the APEC 2020 forest cover objective are related to increasing forest cover. The activities included in this strategic plan are designed to contribute to increasing the area of sustainably managed forests.

29. A proposal by the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization on a regional plan of action for biodiversity in the Amazon region and the organization's programme for protected areas are aimed at contributing to the development of a common regional view and practice in the management of protected areas, with emphasis on

protected areas in border areas and conservation corridors, including in more than one country. The approved programme for protected areas seeks to develop coordination mechanisms and technical and financial instruments to complement the management of national systems of protected areas and to promote joint action with a regional focus for the conservation of biodiversity. Implementation of this programme will also complement national efforts to manage protected areas in the Amazon region.

4. **Global objective 4: Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management**

30. In the African region, emerging issues such as REDD+, the green economy and FLEGT have the potential to reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management. However, a broad assessment needs to be done on the impacts of these emerging issues on sustainable forest management funding in Africa.

31. In the Asia-Pacific region, the launch of the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation is an important example of channelling financial resources for the implementation of sustainable forest management. The Network secured a commitment of $15 million over a five-year period from the Government of China for the implementation of sustainable forest management in the Asia-Pacific region. Since 2008, Network co-sponsors such as Australia and the United States of America have also continued to provide financial contributions to the entity. In addition, the Land Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, through the Forests and Trees Team, and with the support of the German Agency for International Cooperation, assists Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in their REDD+ readiness programmes. In September 2011, the Forests and Trees Team, in collaboration with its partners, namely, the German Agency for International Cooperation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, FAO and the UN-REDD Programme, organized a Pacific regional technical meeting on forestry to discuss various emerging issues, challenges and opportunities, including possible ways forward for forestry in the Pacific. A significant portion of the meeting was devoted to discussing the main themes for a regional policy framework for REDD+, which had been recommended by the Pacific Heads of Forestry in 2009.

C. Millennium Development Goals

32. Since 2004, the European Forest Institute has been implementing a project called "Forest Policy and Economics Education and Research" in South-East European countries. The project has contributed to progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially on poverty eradication, gender equality, environmental sustainability and global partnership for development. In support of forest-based sustainability and improved forest sector governance and in line with the Bologna process, the project is aimed at the graduation of 40 Master of Science students in forest economics and policy; enhancing the experience of 10 regional university lecturers in modern teaching and research methodologies and improved access to European expert networks; training

15 researchers in modern research methodologies in forest policy science and socioeconomics; and offering short courses to close to 300 professionals in relevant forest policy, governance and economic issues.

Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

33. In the Asia-Pacific region, through the promotion of community-based forest management, forests have significantly contributed to poverty reduction and the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 1. Indicators to assess contributions of forests to Goal 1 in the Asia-Pacific region include secure forest tenure rights, the utilization of non-timber forest products, the number of forest-based community enterprises and local rural jobs created through those enterprises, an increase in local average income and the improvement of the rural infrastructure. Governments in the region remain committed to halving extreme poverty by 2015 and many have already adopted poverty-related measures in their national forest policies and programmes. The high incidence of poverty in forested areas and the high dependence of the poor on forest resources reinforces the role that forests play in poverty eradication. The publication *Making forestry work for the poor: Assessment of the contribution of forestry to poverty alleviation in Asia and the Pacific* produced by the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation examines the potential of pro-poor forest management in improving livelihoods and helping to achieve Goal 1. This publication was part of a project jointly implemented by the Network and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. It presents key policies and plans relevant to poverty alleviation in 11 target economies and draws attention to the need for concrete measures to support livelihood development at the local level, and includes case studies on community-based approaches and engagement in forest management. These case studies are also relevant to economies with similar conditions.

34. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization has developed initiatives that contribute directly to the achievement of Goal 1, including a regional project on monitoring afforestation, forest use and changes in the use of land in the Pan-Amazon forest, and to the negotiation of an agreement on cooperation to combat forest fires in border areas.

D. Characteristics of regional and subregional cooperation and partnerships in facilitating sustainable forest management

35. Responses from regional and subregional entities also revealed engagement in North-South and South-South cooperation and demonstrated a desire for, inter alia, stronger cooperation capacity-building, scientific research, training and education, promotion of sustainable forest management, and criteria and indicators. Most regions are engaged in the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

36. In facilitating cooperation on sustainable forest management, the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, the Montreal Process, FOREST EUROPE, the Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa and the International Tropical Timber Organization continue to cooperate on opportunities for international and inter-organizational cooperation to streamline the international reporting on forests and forest management. The ECE/FAO team of specialists on monitoring

sustainable forest management provided advice from a regional perspective on several matters relating to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment and the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire — the new initiative developed jointly by the FAO, FOREST EUROPE, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Montreal Process, the Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa and ECE/FAO. At the meeting of the ECE/FAO team of specialists on monitoring sustainable forest management held in May 2012 in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, experts supported a proposal for developing a periodic, jointly owned bulletin based on existing initiatives among organizations and countries to improve cooperation among different actors in the pan-European region. The advanced versions of documents for collaborative reporting on forests prepared by all actors involved were discussed and agreed upon at a meeting on "Streamlining forest-based reporting: a collaboration workshop", held in Jacksonville, Florida, from 19 to 23 August 2012, including the overall reporting structure, basic terms and definitions, and the general schedule.

37. In the Asia-Pacific region, forest-related development is uneven and requires coordinated efforts by all forest stakeholders. In order to benefit from technical expertise, the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation has successfully sought the participation, in its projects and activities, of academic institutions in Canada, China, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the United States. The Network would like to see more vibrant international cooperation among different stakeholders to promote sustainable forest management in the region. Although standard codes of conduct on sustainable forest management may be a norm for developed economies, for many emerging and least developed economies, managing techniques may still be lacking.

38. Through its Forests and Trees Team, the Land Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community continues to pursue partnerships to strengthen its capacity to support member countries in better managing and using their forest and tree resources.

39. Through the Montreal Process, member countries continue to make a voluntary commitment to work alongside each other to further sustainable forest management and to create a pathway for collaboration and capacity-building. Through its criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, the Process provides its member countries with an internationally agreed, locally supported tool to integrate issues as they apply to forests; a common ground on which stakeholders, public agencies and countries can work out shared objectives and collaborative actions towards sustainable forest management; a common framework to monitor, assess and report on trends in forest conditions with respect to the full range of forest values and, in turn, on progress towards sustainable forest management; and a network and forum for exchanging knowledge and experience, deliberating policy tools, maintaining awareness of the important role of forests and fostering collaboration among countries with diverse natural, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. One of the most notable and valuable achievements of the Montreal Process is the establishment of mutual trust and confidence, which has encouraged the 12 member countries to develop a "network of knowledge". Through discussion, research, cooperation, communication and capacity-building among countries, this network has enabled member countries to make individual and collective progress in tackling new and emerging issues, such as climate change, water, bioenergy and biodiversity.

40. Recently, the Montreal Process formed a new strategic partnership with the International Tropical Timber Organization, FOREST EUROPE and FAO to find innovative ways to streamline global forest reporting, reduce the burden of reporting on countries and promote sustainable forest management. In October 2011, Canada, as Chair of the Montreal Process Working Group, hosted a workshop on international and regional criteria and indicator processes that brought these four organizations/processes together to review their evolution, examine emerging forest issues and explore possibilities to collaborate and to streamline reporting on sustainable forest management. The four bodies recognize the value of working with other processes and organizations to avoid the proliferation of monitoring requirements and associated reporting burdens. They also initiated the development of a joint communications plan to improve communication in respect of sustainable forest management and have met regularly to enhance global collaboration in addressing issues of common interest. Through the International Model Forest Network, a number of countries, including Argentina, Canada, Chile, China and the Russian Federation, are collaborating on methods to demonstrate sustainable forest management using the Montreal Process criteria and indicators. They have found innovative, low-cost and long-term solutions to the challenges facing advocates and practitioners of sustainable forest management. At the same time, participation by Argentina, Chile and Uruguay in the Montreal Process has facilitated communication, consultation and dialogue on global and local forest sustainability among Southern Cone countries. In 2009, these member countries played a key role in the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme project entitled "Strengthening the capacities of the Southern Cone countries for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on progress towards sustainable forest management through the development, use and implementation of criteria and indicators". At the twenty-third World Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, held in Seoul in August 2010, the Process hosted two technical sessions on reporting on the sustainability of temperate and boreal forests using criteria and indicators. In March 2011, Japan hosted an international seminar entitled "Challenges of sustainable forest management: Integrating environmental, social and economic values of forests in Tokyo. This country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests was co-hosted by Indonesia and co-organized by the Montreal Process, the International Tropical Timber Organization and FOREST EUROPE.

Partnerships with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

41. Partnerships are indispensable tools and bridges for the entity to add value to and leverage resources available for joint programme activities. In Africa, regional economic communities continue to promote collaboration among countries on forest-related issues of relevance to the respective subregions. This is in addition to several initiatives such as FLEGT that have a North-South character. The African Forest Forum and FAO have worked jointly on climate change issues in Africa as well as on work related to the Great Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative and the Sahel Initiative. The World Agroforestry Centre and the African Forest Forum have also collaborated on climate change tasks, including activities related to greening the Sahel.

42. The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation has conducted joint activities with several member organizations of

the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, namely, FAO, the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In November 2011, the Network co-organized the second Asia-Pacific Forestry Week with the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. In October 2012, the Network, the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature and other organizations, co-organized the Regional Workshop on Incentives to Catalyse Sustainable Management and Restoration of Mangroves in Asia and the Pacific.

43. In cooperation with FAO, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community supports Pacific island countries in areas relating to the Global Forest Resources Assessment, the report "State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources", and working together through the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission. Through this Commission, the Forests and Trees Team of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community actively participated in the preparation of *Asia-Pacific Forests and Forestry to 2020: Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study II*; the Team took part in the executive committee and supported the various subregional and national studies. Also through the Commission, it is currently participating in the Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank, which provides support and assistance to member countries on forest policy analysis and formulation.

44. The Montreal Process has also built linkages with other criteria and indicator processes. As a result of the strengthened relationships and goodwill developed at the workshop held in Victoria, Canada, in October 2011, the Montreal Process, the International Tropical Timber Organization, FOREST EUROPE and FAO endorsed a joint statement in January 2012 to streamline global forest reporting through enhanced collaboration. The joint statement is a milestone in the global process of developing sustainable forest management indicators. It complements the directives adopted at the 2010 meeting of the FAO Committee on Forestry according to which countries would seek ways to converge global reporting approaches to reduce the overall reporting burden. By working together, the Montreal Process, the International Tropical Timber Organization, FOREST EUROPE, FAO, the Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa and the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, developed the new Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire which better aligns global data-collection schedules and requirements. The questionnaire will greatly increase the consistency of global forest data and the efficiency of its collection and dissemination, which will in turn contribute to reducing the reporting burden on countries. Effectively, countries that report to more than one of these bodies can now provide their data once to meet multiple reporting requirements. The goal is to ensure that the data being requested by the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment is consistent with the data already being reported within the criteria and indicator processes. The closer link between the Global Forest Resources Assessment and the regional and international criteria and indicator processes is also expected to increase the relevance and use of the Assessment. The questionnaire is one of the most tangible, broadly based outcomes to emerge from recent efforts to streamline forest-based reporting. The first global datasets from the questionnaire will be available by 2015 as part of the next Global Forest Resources Assessment. In August 2012, the United States, a member of the Montreal Process, hosted a workshop with the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire partner organizations and the secretariats of the United Nations Forum on Forests, and the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change. The participants recommended increased interaction with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting and the secretariats of the Rio Conventions to highlight the value of the forest indicator expertise and information possessed by the regional and international criteria and indicator processes, and to gain greater insight into such emerging issues as biodiversity and climate change and their impacts on sustainable forest management.

IV. Lessons learned

45. Some regional and subregional entities shared lessons learned. For example, greater efforts should be made to demonstrate the relevance of the work done on criteria and indicators at the international level. Interaction among forest-related processes and organizations whose work focuses on forest-related issues should be fostered through flexible initiatives that are tailored to the needs and situations of countries.

46. The development and adoption of the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire as a tool for the joint collection and dissemination of forest data and information is a significant step towards better cooperation among forest data-collection partners for the benefit of multiple users. However, stronger international cooperation is needed to further promote the use of information provided by criteria and indicator processes on sustainable forest management and the gathering, analysing and reporting of data to audiences within and beyond the forest community. In this context, efforts to further develop the establishment of a "forest indicators partnership", namely, a virtual platform for collaboration on forest indicators, may be useful.

47. There is a need to develop and strengthen private sector engagement in the African region in such areas as primary forest production by smallholders (farm forestry), value addition to primary and secondary forest production, forest-water relations, capacity and skills development at various levels, especially with respect to issues relating to climate change, and rehabilitation of degraded lands.

48. FLEGT, especially law enforcement, requires the mobilization of several sectors outside forests where the forest sector lacks convening power. Harmonizing such sectors requires pragmatism (consulting, assigning roles and responsibilities). In addition, since many of these issues are the responsibility of national Governments, there is a need for a platform, resources and mechanisms to bring together stakeholders and resources to implement recommendations.

Annex

Regional and subregional entities providing inputs to the tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission

Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation

Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization

African Forest Forum

East African Community

Economic Commission for Europe

European Forestry Institute

FOREST EUROPE

Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network

Montreal Process

Near East Forestry Commission

Network of Parliamentarians for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems

Secretariat of the Pacific Community